Central American NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Central American Group of the Spanish Main Society.

Editor: Michael P Birks, Flixton Girls' School, Urmston, Manchester M31 3DR, England 061-747 5924 (Home)

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EDITORIAL

Once again we reach the final issue of your subscription, and a subscription renewal form is enclosed. We hope you will renew promptly - our survival depends upon it. We are pleased to be able to keep subscriptions at the same level as last year; although our reserves are small, they will be adequate for the coming year if we maintain our membership.

Despite the fact that I can barely find the time to type and print twelve sides, this issue is sixteen. Providing I do not run out of copy and the group does not run out of funds, I shall do my best to keep to a sixteen page issue. It will cost more to produce and to post, so it is even more vital we keep our members and attract new ones.

Salvador and Honduras have been under respresented recently and so I would welcome copy concerning these Republics.

The next meeting of the **Spanish Main** will be on Saturday 24 October at the Victory Services Club as usual. The subject will be Colombia.

The next **auction** will be Saturday 14 November at the Great Northern Hotel, Peterborough, adjacent to the railway station. Viewing from 10 a.m..

The **Spanish Main Cup** competition will be Saturday 28 November this year, in conjunction with a meeting of the **Chile Group**. The competition is for 16 sheets, and full details are available from Brian Moorhouse. It will provide an excellent opportunity for those members who have never competed before, or who have only competed at club level, to gain experience and a lot of pleasure. A word of advice:if you wait until your entry is complete before committing yourself you will probably not be ready in time! Write to Brian this week, commit yourself, and you will be surprised how quickly your competition entry will take shape!

mpb

COSTA RICAN REGISTRATION LABELS: A FURTHER REPORT

by RICHARD SAUNDRY

From time to time I have a nagging thought at the back of my mind that the vast proportion of articles and queries that appear in CANL never get answered, and it is not that often that we see a follow-up article. I often wonder if anyone even bothers to read some of the articles, in particular those featuring Costa Rica. Well, our Editor can sleep easy because my faith in our readership has been restored. In response to the first part of my recent article dealing with three scarce types of Costa Rican registration labels (CANL 43) we have an excellent article written by Hector Mena (CANL 46) adding much information to what I wrote about the first of the three labels, namely that used in the first decade of this century. Furthermore George McCarty of San Jose has sent me three further examples of this scarce type on cover. I think that such replies to my original article require some sort of response. In addition, I have also acquired a further beautiful example of this type of label on cover.

First I wish to reinforce one point that Hector made. There was a similar series of registration labels used in Costa Rica in the late 1920's to about 1932. These are of the types shown at the bottom of Hector's article on page 158 of issue No.46, the examples shown being for Siquirres and Rio Cuarto. Such labels are relatively common and I have several examples on cover in my collection. What distinguishes this later type from the earlier more scarce type is that the wording at the top of the label 'Republica de Costa Rica' appears in an Italic script, whereas in the earlier scarce type these words appear in an upright script. I have yet to meet an example of the less common type used from one of the larger towns or cities and guess that this type was only issued to the smaller post offices. Furthermore since I already have a Siquirres label of the earlier type this shows that Hector's labels are examples of a later and quite separate series.

Secondly I note an example of the Santa Maria label on a registered cover of July 1907 to Vienna. It is a great shame that in the illustration in the article the label could not be seen. Nevertheless the fact that subgroup (b) label exists and that this general type exists perforated is quite exciting. So far this is the only perforated subgroup (b) example reported. Likewise his second example, from La Union, indicates that subtype (a) labels may also exist perforated. Hector Mena goes on to report that he has further examples on photostats of covers in the collection of Hal Edwards for subgroup (a) labels used in Turrialba and in Jiminez in the 1920's. Are these also perforated I ask?

I have acquired three further examples of these early registration lables on cover. The first, figure 1, is on a domestic registered letter from Matina on 18 July 1916.

Figure 1

This example is most iteresting as it is imperforate on three sides and perforated 11.5 along the bottom edge. In this case the office name 'Matina' is composed of a capital 'M' with the rest of the word in lower case letters. This, to continue my system of nomenclature, since it is patently different from the others, should be described as subtype (d), but as I hope to demonstrate, such divisions into possible subtypes is almost meaningless.

The two remaining letters emanated from Juan Vinas, in January 1912 (Fig 2) and March 1916. In both cases the Juan Vinas labels are imperforate. Close inspection, however, reveals that these two examples are not identical. In the 1912 example the printing of the office name fits a subtype (a) classification, whereas in the 1916 example the name is printed with a very bold capital 'J' and 'V' with the rest of the letters lower case (another example of subtype (d)).

The last example that I have acquired (Fig 3), used in 1907, has a Limon label but here the printing is consistent with subtype (a), and quite distinct from the 1909 cover illustrated in my earlier CANL article. Furthermore, at this time Limon seemed to be using red ink for their handstamps and it is interesting that the registry number 1048 seems to have been struck on the label locally since the colour here is the same as the date stamp.

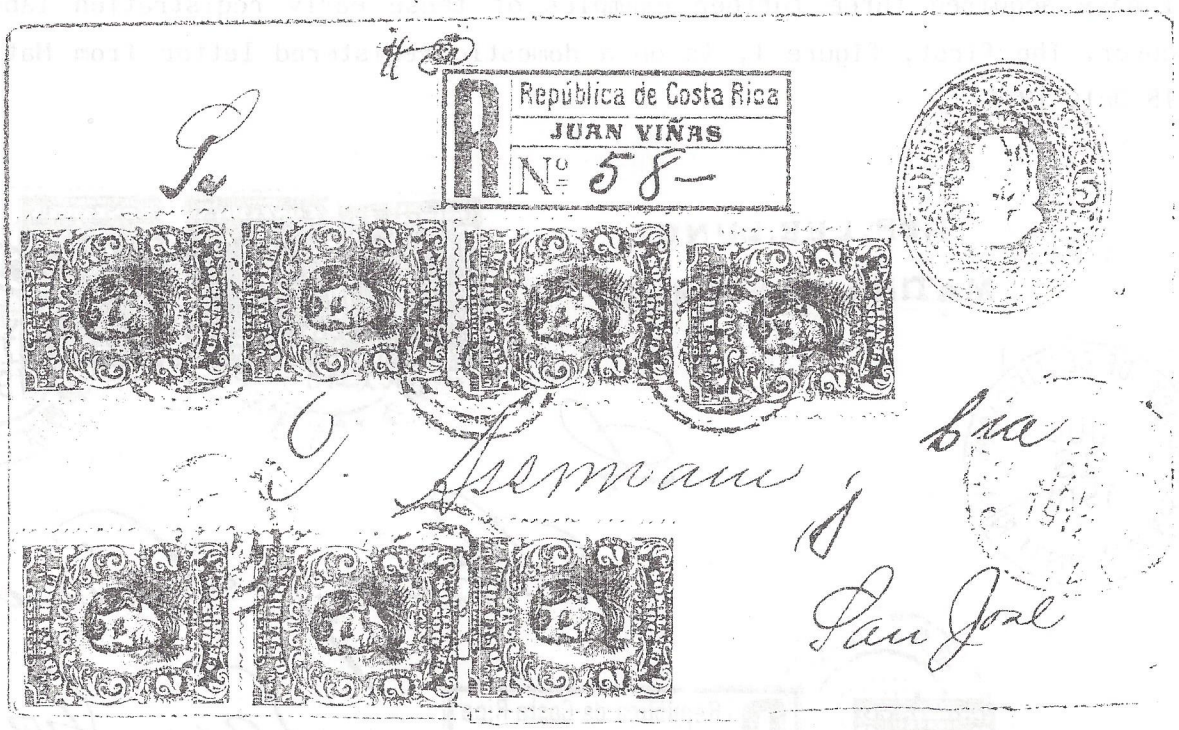
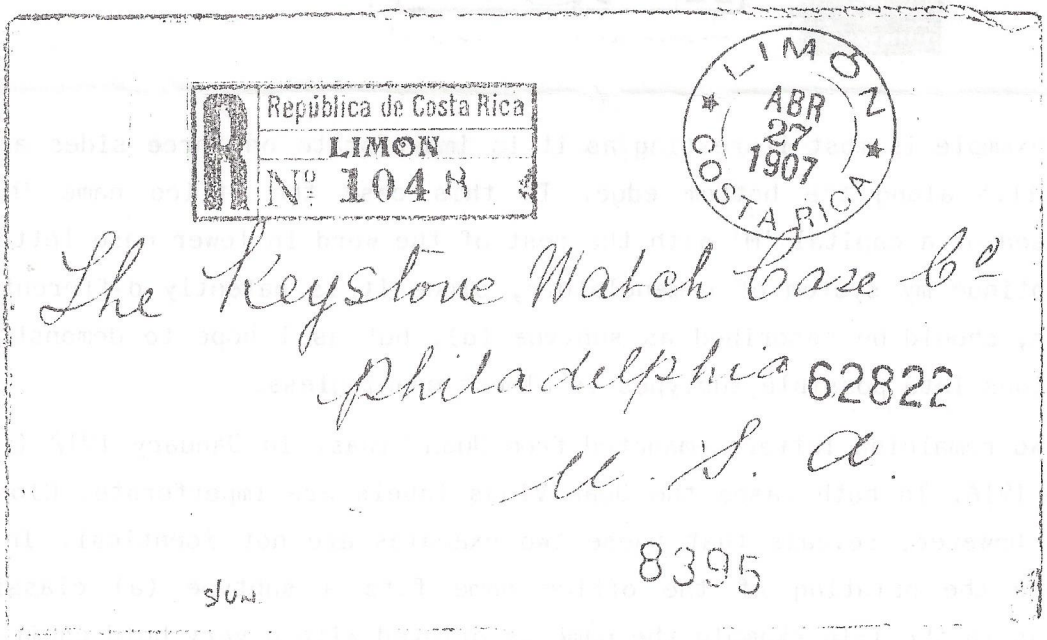


Figure 2 (above)

Figure 3 (below)



What then can we conclude from this little survey of a handful of examples? First, as more examples seem to have surfaced we are forced to conclude that this interesting issue of registry labels is perhaps not quite as scarce as I thought when I first put pen to paper a year ago. On the other hand they are still decidedly scarce. Secondly I am now forced to modify my ideas on classification into different subtypes. We have already found four, or possibly five ways of printing the office names and I guess that it is most likely that they

would have all been made by the same printers and that what any particular office got was what the printer had at hand at the time of fulfilling a particular order. It would seem likely that in the beginning, in about 1907 say, most offices would have been furnished with labels printed with subtype (a) printing. In further orders different styles of type were probably used as shown with different typeset for subsequent labels used from Limon and Juan Vinas. Accordingly I think that classification into possible subtypes (a through d, etc.) is an unneccessary complication that serves no useful purpose.

Thirdly the period of use of such labels must be extended through to about 1916 and I would guess that in time examples will emerge from some of the smaller offices that will extend this period of use. Lastly most examples appear to be imperforate. Why some are perforated and others not is a mystery. The example from Matina which is perforated on one side only suggests the possibility that it would have been attached to the receipt handed to the sender of the registered letter in case he or she needed to make a claim against the Post Office.

(Continued from page 204)

The mystery set, if it fits here, would be listed as follows:
C0.10 (2941), C0.15 (2942), C0.25 (2943), C050 (2944), C4 (2945), C7 (2946), C7 (2947), C15 (MS2948).
Of course the stamps may be for the youth exhibition; the stamps for the Essen 88 exhibition are not so inscribed (depicting **footballers** would you believe) although the miniature sheet is so inscribed, unlike this set.

Thirdly, needing confirmation:

05	Expo-Filat-Int-ESSEN '88	14-04-88
05-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	14-04-88
06	Expo-Filat-Int-Filandia '88	01-06-88
06-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	01-06-88
07	Nicaragua Lucha por la Paz	19-07-88
08	Héroes y Mártires de la Revolución (Permanente)	27-08-88
09	Flores	30-08-88
10	Moluscos	20-09-88
11	V Centenario de Encuentro de Dos Mundos	12-10-88
11-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	12-10-88
12	Insectos Escarabajos	10-11-88
13	Primer Centenario Azul de Rubén Darío	10-12-88

Managua, 21 de Febrero de 1991.

Suggested SG N°s: Essen '88; 2949-2955, MS2956. Finlandia '88; 2957-2963, MS2964. Peace; 2965-66. Heroes; 2967-2974. Flowers; 2975-2982. Moluscs; 2983-2989. Antiquities; 2990-95, MS2996. Insects; 2997-3003. Dario; 3004. I have all these.

THE RAILWAYS OF GUATEMALA by DR ANTHONY GOODBODY

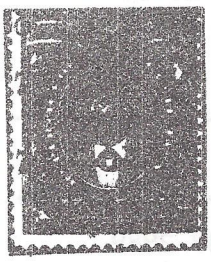
Introduction

Guatemala is the third largest of the Central American Republics. It is bordered on the west and north by Mexico and on the east by Honduras and El Salvador with whom it shared a railway system. To the south the the Pacific Ocean with a coastline of 150 miles and the port of San Jose. There are also about 60 miles of Caribbean coast to the north east. It is along here that the chief port, Puerto Barrios, is situated. The official language is Spanish but the country has been independent from Spain since 1822 during which time it has been ruled by a succession of dictators.

In 1978 there were between 600 and 700 miles of 3 ft gauge track in Guatemala. Some 509 miles of this were accounted for by Ferrocarriles Guatemaltecos (FEGUA) formerly the International Railways of Central America, which had track in Guatemala and in El Salvador. The railway was at one time American owned and had its Head Office in Jersey City. The system extended from Ayutla on the Mexican border via Guatemala City to Zacapa and Puerto Barrios. At Zacapa a line ran east into El Salvador and there was also a branch from Escuintla southwards to San Jose. Today the route length is quoted as 917.4 km, which is rather more than the 1978 figure. On the other hand Cook's Overseas timetable lists but two passenger routes: Tecun Uman (on the Mexican border and, from a study of the map is none other than Ayutla mentioned above) to Guatemala City (285 km) and Guatemala City to Puerto Barrios (318 km).

A further 30 route miles of railway are owned by the Verapaz Railway. It extends from Panzos to Pancajche and is completely isolated from any other railway. Formerly it was German owned but in 1942 the railway was nationalised. For a long time its future was uncertain but it continues to appear on maps and as an entry in 'World Railways'. The only other railways in Guatemala are owned by the Cia. Agricola de Guatemala (United Fruit Company) formerly of Boston, Mass. but now, apparently based in Guatemala. They are industrial lines serving the banana plantations. They do, however, connect with the FEGUA system.

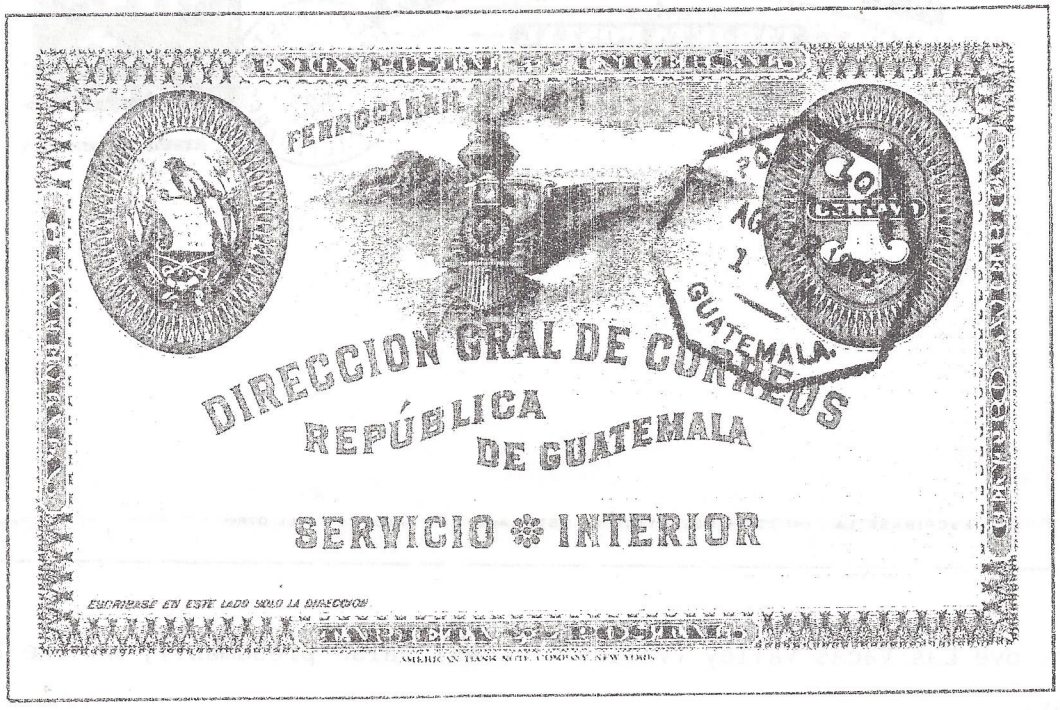
Railway Bond Stamps Overprinted for Postage, 1886 (SG 26-30)



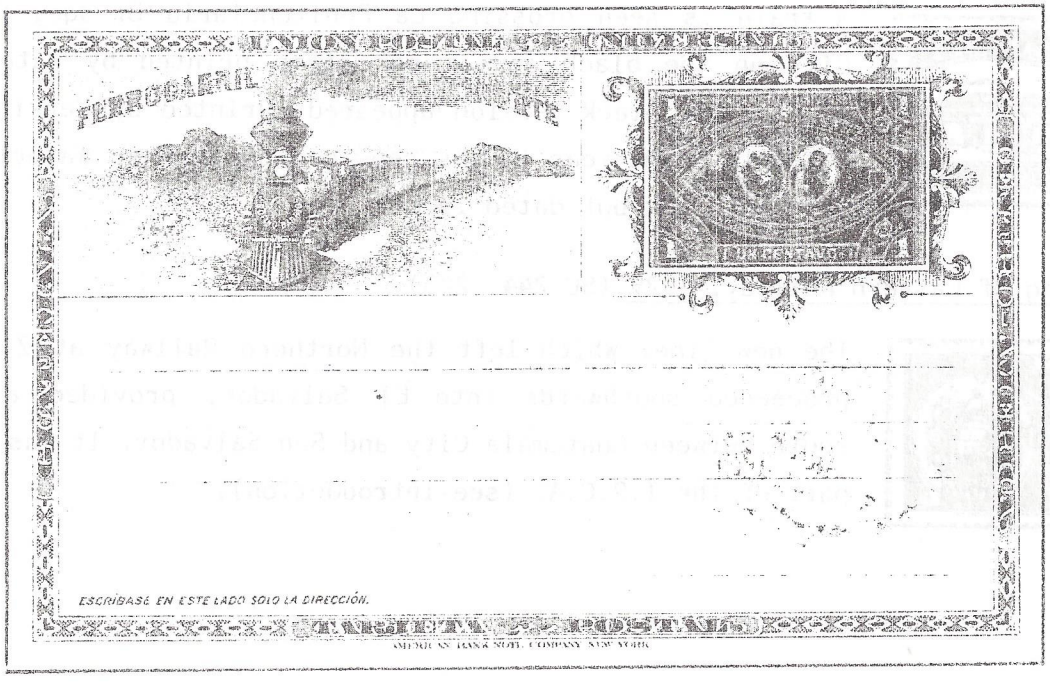
The 1 peso railway bond stamp was issued in 1884 to raise money for the financing of the railway. A stamp could be bought every three months from a post office and stuck onto a card with spaces for forty stamps. At the end of ten years a 40 peso bond was issued. The stamp in inscribed 'Ferrocarril al Norte' and features a portrait of the President of Guatemala, J Rufino Barrios.

The Northern Railway can only be the line from Guatemala City to Puerto Barrios and the President, elected in 1873, was instrumental in promoting the railway, but us chiefly remembered for his efforts towards Central American unification. He failed to achieve this and died in battle with El Salvador in 1885. The over-print on this stamp is the subject of a great many varieties, several of them of modest price in the catalogue.

Definitive Issue of Postal Stationery, 1895 (Higgins & Gage No.6)

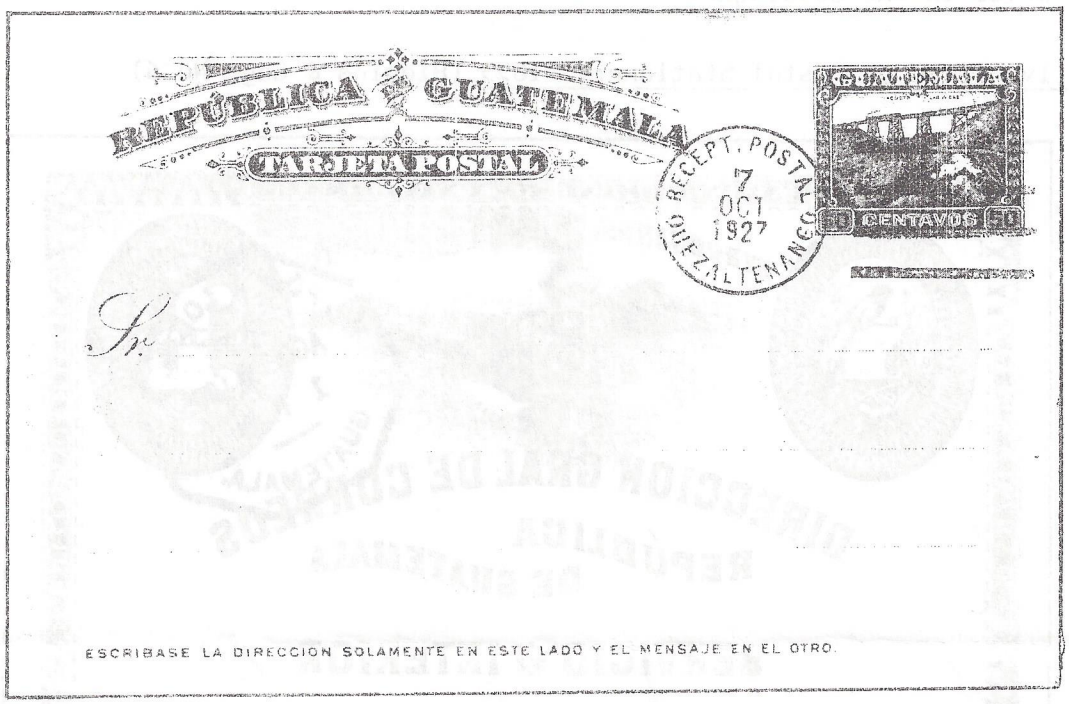


Central American Exhibition, 1897 (Higgins & Gage No.7)


UNION POSTAL UNIVERSAL
FERROCARRIL
ESCRIBASE EN ESTE LADO SOLO LA DIRECCIÓN.
TARJETA ✠ POSTAL
AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY NEW YORK

This latter card was one of two printed postcards, used as publicity for the Northern Railway, showing a train with 'J Rufino Barrios' inscribed on the smokebox door.

Definitive Issue of Postal Stationery, 1921 (Higgins & Gage No.13)



Viaduct ove Las Vacas Valley (Valley of Cows), also presumably, on the Northern Railway.

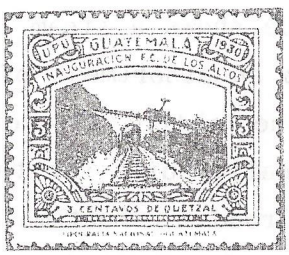
Definitive Issue, 1921, 1924 (SG 171, 210 (illus), 222)

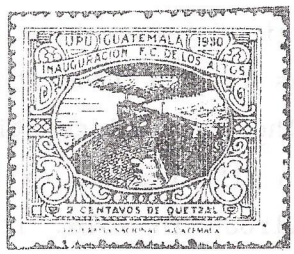
A train is seen crossing La Penitenciaria Bridge, Guatemala City on the black and orange stamp printed by Waterlow. In 1924 an all black version appeared, printed by Perkins Bacon. Later the same year it was replaced by another Waterlow stamp also in black but dated 1926.

Opening of Eastern Railway, 1929 (SG 244, 245)

The new line, which left the Northern Railway at Zacapa and proceeded southwards into El Salvador, provided a through route between Guatemala City and San Salvador. It was formerly part of the I.R.C.A. (see introduction).

Opening of Los Altos Electric Railway, 1930 (SG 246-50, 251-253)





The first stamps were a provisional issue obtained by overprinting the definitives of 1926. The railway, opened in 1930, was German built. It connected the town of San Felipe with Quetzaltenango, 7,600 feet above sea level. The line was an economic failure and after three years it was closed. The pictorial stamps show the hydro-electric dam, from which the railway derived its power, at Quetzaltenango (2¢), the permanent way at Los Pirineos (3¢) and the station at Quetzaltenango (5¢).

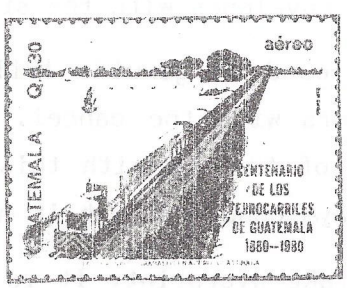
Centenary of the Birth of J Rufino Barrios, 1935 (SG 285)

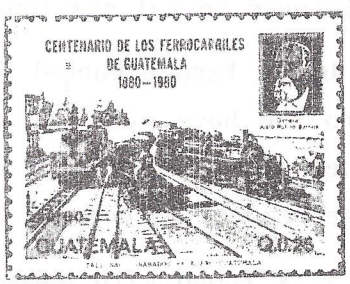
This stamp depicts the arms of Guatemala and a locomotive which unfortunately is unrecognisable.

Airmail Issues, 1935, 1937, 1939 (SG 310, 310a, 364, 395)

This stamp depicts the Plaza Barrios and the railway station in Guatemala City.

Railway Centenary, 1980 (SG 1217-19)





The event commemorated by these stamps can only be the incorporation of the

Northern Railway referred to above. The inset portrait of J R Barrios on the Q 0.25 value lends support to this theory. As for the stamps themselves, not a great deal of information is available. The Q 0.10 value shows a steam train on Las Vacas Viaduct (see above). The Q 0.25 value shows an assortment of motive power. The early locomotive remains unidentified. The oldest locomotive in Guatemala (if it still exists) is a 4-4-0, N°84 originally built for the Santa Cruz Railroad in 1876. It was sold to the Ocos Railroad in Guatemala which eventually became part of the I.R.C.A.. This locomotive is a likely contender because the oldest locomotive available is likely to be chosen to contrast with more modern motive power. Further, none of the photographs I have seen of more recent locomotives exhibit the spark arresting smoke stack which is such a prominent feature of the locomotive on the stamp.

In 1926 the Baldwin Locomotive Works built a 2-6-6-2 type side tank locomotive for the Uintah Railway in Colorado. The running number was 50. In 1928 a repeat order was placed and the locomotive numbered 51. When the Uintah Railway closed down the two Mallet locomotives were sold to the Sumpter Valley Railway where they were numbered 250 and 251, and used to haul logging trains from Bates to the sawmill at Baker, Oregon. In the course of time the logging operation ceased and the two locomotives were sold to I.R.C.A. who converted them from tank locomotives to tender locomotives. They retained their Sumpter Valley numbers. They were chiefly employed om the hill out of Escuintla to Guatemala City.

I regret having no details of the diesel locomotive, which carries the number 611.

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THE RAILWAYS OF COSTA RICA

From Gina Wayman of Costa Rica:

While the target cancel was the primary cancel used on telegraph stamps it was also a very common postal cancel in the 1895-1910 period with use into the late teens. It was the primary cancel for stamps on registered letters but it is also found on normal ones. The only two known covers with the Birris Bridge stamp are registered postal stationery envelopes with the stamp tied by the target cancel.

The black target cancel is found on genuine 1911 overprints on the telegraph stamp. We have even had covers with the cancel. Most errors (99+%) with this cancel are however fake. All of the 10c with this cancel are fake!! The purple target cancel is however always good although it may have been a favour cancel.

N°.93 is found with normal fake overprint. It is usually used or without gum and in that condition, most copies of the varities are fake.

Except for the 5c and 10c very few fakes exist and we have never seen a mint example. The used all have target cancels and are poorly done.

Nº.94 was probably never used by the public and used examples are extremely rare. All black target cancels are fakes and almost all are really bad with horrible ink. It is known genuine with the purple target. The only other genuine used we have had (it was a perf 14!) had a small double oval with San Jose between the lines and with the centre blank. This was used on registered mail at the time and a few philatelic covers with the issue and this cancel are known. The used example was probably taken off such a cover. Other genuine cancels can exist as used are reported in the early literature. The bad news is that fakes exist with genuine cancels (but date not visible) applied over very good fake overprints on stamps without gum. Fortunately they are seldom seen.

Nº.94. Most mint original gum copies are genuine - but careful as there are fake mint and all are excellently made. These are the truly dangerous as the measurements are very close. The ink is usually a little lighter but very good.

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NICARAGUA: 1936 SG 886, Scott C148, a variety from Derek Pocock of Australia.

Normally this stamp is a triple overprint:

a) Correo Aereo/Interior/Vale $02 on 3 cents olive grey,
b) Signatures of Deshon and Sevilla
c) Resello 1936 (in black)

This is a common stamp and Maxwell in his catalogue states that some 50,000 were issued. It also exists officially with Resello 1936 double with one inverted, as Gibbons 886a.

Now add Resello 1936 overprint double both upright plus the Resello 1935 red boxed overprint, this latter being at the foot of the stamp.

I have a mint copy with Cone (or Stroubs?) underprint 'counterfeit'.

Yet what is the evidence for this? The four overprints/surcharge are all apparently genuine. Maybe odd things did happen in the Managua Post Office after hours around this time.

I believe we should list as many as possible of these stamps of dubious provenance. Like the 1920 VALE/un centavo/de Cordoba on 2 cent vermilion (as opposed to SG 440 - Vale). Maxwell lists this stamp as 483F (and otherwise Yvert 397A with the stamp being ignored by Gibbons and Scott), together with a, b and c varieties, but believes it to be fraudulent. Yet all my 20 copies are quite good postally used which rather goes against a non-genuine item. To his varieties of the stamps I would add d) do for de and e) surcharge double, both upright.

NICARAGUAN 'NEW' ISSUES

It has not been the policy of this journal to list New Issues as they appear, believing that this is better done by others and that space in this journal is at a premium. However the inability of Gibbons to list the New Issues of Nicaragua from March 1988 to date is annoying to those of us who use the listing, and a source of concern to Gibbons. The receipt of a listing of New Issues from the Nicaraguan Philatelic Bureau, sent by Derek Pocock, goes some way to resolving the problem, but it does raise a problem regarding one issue of 1988. Additionally there is no proof that the proposed issue dates were actually met, and so reports of confirmation by holders of First Day Covers are sought.

First, what is certain:

INSTITUTO NICARAGUENSE DE TELECOMUNICACIONES Y CORREOS

(TELCOR)

PROGRAMA DE EMISIONES DE 1988

N°	NOMBRE DE LA EMISION	FECHA CIRCULACION
01	Juegos Olímpicos Calgary '88	30-01-88
01-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	30-01-88
02	Juegos Olímpicos Verano Corea '88	28-02-88
02-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	28-02-88
03	X Aniv. del Periodismo Catacumba U.P.N.	10-02-88

Issue N°01: SG 2923-2929; 01-A MS2930. Issue N°2: SG 2933-2939; 02-A MS2940. Issue N°03: SG 2931-2932.

Secondly, the problem:

04	Expo-Filat-Int-Juvalux '88	03-03-88
04-A	Idem Hoja Filatélica	03-03-88

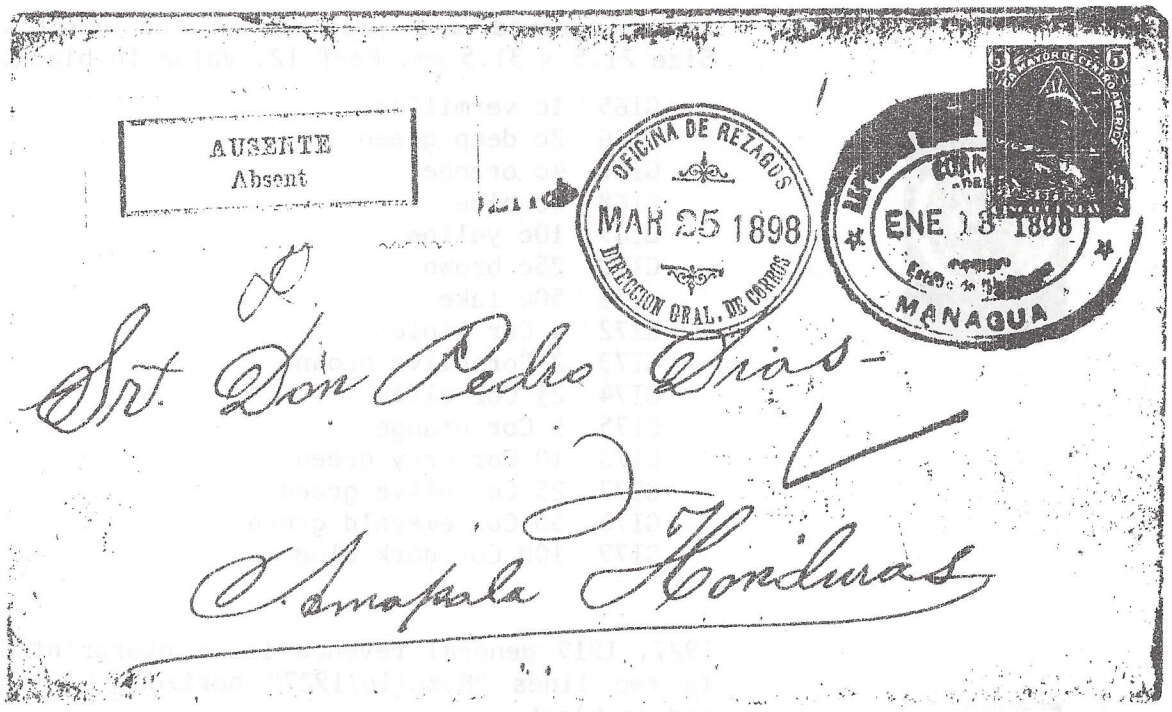
This set appears to not have been supplied by my New Issue dealer. Does it exist? I say 'appears' because I have a set of animals which also 'appear' to be unlisted and may be the 'missing' set. Judging by the values, I would suggest it fits here, but why issue a set for a purpose, and not make that purpose clear on the stamps? Does anyone know if the proposed Juvalux exhibition actually took place? If not it woud explain why the set appears just to be an animals set with no special purpose.

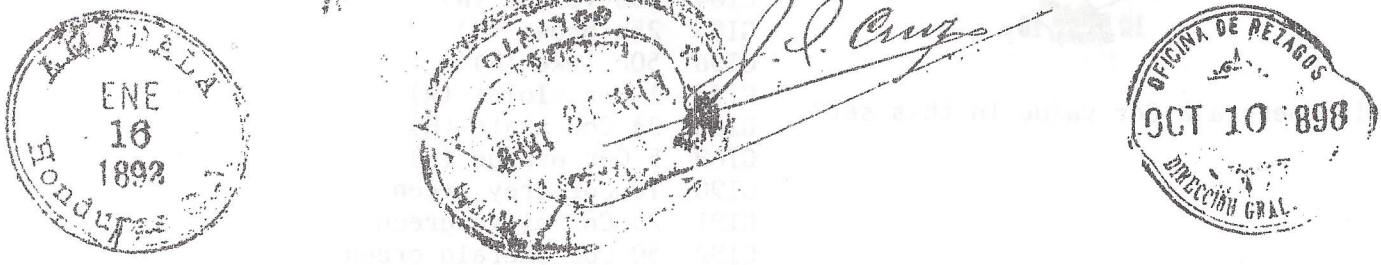
Your comments are invited.

continued on page 197

NICARAGUA: A COVER RETURNED FROM HONDURAS

by KILIAN E NATHAN FRPS,L



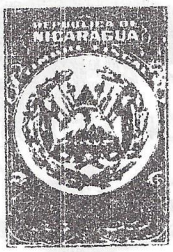


The Nicaraguan postal stationery envelope above was posted on 13 January 1898 to Ampala in Honduras, arriving there three days later, on 16 January. The post office was unable to deliver the letter and on 25 March it was handstamped "Oficina de Rezagos Direccion Gral. de Correos Mar 25, 1898". Apparently the letter was still with the Honduras Post Office in October as it is similarly backstamped on 10 October.

The "Oficina de Rezago" postmark of Honduras is certainly very rare as is the "Ausente" label, affixed when the cover was undeliverable.

THE REVENUE STAMPS OF NICARAGUA

Continued from page 191. Comments on this tentative listing are invited.



1919. Engraved and printed by the ABNCo.. Size 21.5 x 31.5 mm. Perf 12. Value in black.

GI65 1c vermilion
GI66 2c deep green
GI67 4c orange
GI68 5c blue
GI69 10c yellow
GI70 25c brown
GI71 50c lake
GI72 1 Cor violet
GI73 2 Cor olive brown
GI74 2½ Cor slate
GI75 5 Cor orange
GI76 10 Cor grey green
GI77 25 Cor olive green
GI78 50 Cor emerald green
GI79 100 Cor dark blue

1927. 1919 general revenue issue overprinted in two lines "Resello/1927" horizontally in red or black.

GI80 1c vermilion (Bk)
GI81 2c deep green (R)
GI82 4c orange (Bk)
GI83 5c blue (R)
GI84 10c yellow (R)
GI85 25c brown (R)
GI86 50c lake (R)
GI87 1 Cor violet (R)
GI88 2½ Cor slate (R)
GI89 5 Cor orange (R)
GI90 10 Cor grey green
GI91 25 Cor olive green
GI92 50 Cor emerald green
GI93 100 Cor dark blue

Is there a 2 Cor value in this set?

1927. As above, overprinted in violet.

GI94 1c vermilion
GI95 2c deep green
GI96 4c orange
GI97 5c blue
GI98 10c yellow
GI99 25c brown
GI100 50c Lake
GI101 1 Cor violet
GI102 2½ Cor slate
GI103 5 Cor orange
GI104 10 Cor grey green
GI105 25 Cor olive green

1928. As above, but dated 1928, in violet.

GI106 1c vermilion
GI107 2c deep green
GI108 4c orange
GI109 5c blue
GI110 10c yellow
GI111 25c brown
GI112 50c lake
GI113 1 Cor violet
GI114 2 Cor olive brown
GI115 2½ Cor slate
GI116 5 Cor orange
GI117 10 Cor grey green
GI118 25 Cor olive green
GI119 50 Cor emerald green
GI120 100 Cor dark blue

1928. 1919 general revenue issue overprinted in three lines "Fiscales/Resello/1928" in black.

GI121 2c deep green
GI122 5c blue
GI123 10c yellow
GI124 50c lake
GI125 1 Cor violet

1928. 1919 general revenue issue surcharged in three lines "Fiscales/Resello - 1928/ Vale 1 Cent", in black.

GI126 1c on 5c blue

1929. 1919 general revenue issue overprinted in two lines "Resello/1929", in black or red

GI127 1c vermilion (Bk)
GI128 2c deep green (R)
GI129 5c blue (R)
GI130 10c yellow (R)

1930. 1919 general revenue design in new colours. Values in black.

GI131 1c brown
GI132 1c blue
GI133 2c green
GI134 2c yellow
GI135 4c brown
GI136 5c green
GI137 5c brown
GI138 10c red
GI139 10c black
GI140 25c yellow orange
GI141 50c green
GI142 1 Cor orange
GI143 5 Cor slate blue
GI144 25 Cor brown

1931. 1930 general revenue issue surcharged vertically "Resello 1931/ 1 centavo cordoba" in red.

GI145 1c on 5c brown

1931. 1919 general revenue issue overprinted horizontally "1931" in black.

GI146 4c orange
GI147 50c lake

1931. 1930 general revenue issue overprinted horizontally "1931" in black.

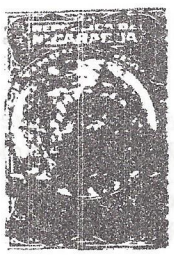
GI148 2c green
GI149 10c black
GI150 1 Cor orange
GI151 5 Cor slate

1932. 1930 general revenue issue overprinted vertically downwards "1932" in black.

GI152 10c black
GI153 5 Cor slate

Date? 1930 general revenue issue surcharged horizontally "Vale/un Cordoba" and bar, in red.

GI154 1 Cor on 50 Cor emerald green

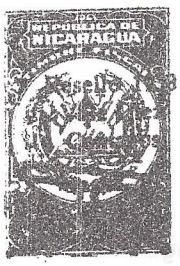


Date? GI154 further surcharged in heavier type in three lines "Vale/un/cordoba" and bar, in black.

GI155 1 Cor on 50 Cor emerald green

Date? 1930 general revenue issue surcharged horizontally "Vale/diez cts./de/cordoba" and bar in black.

GI156 10c on 25 Cor brown



1933. 1919 general revenue issue surcharged horiz. "Resello 1933/Vale Diez/Centavos" in black.

GI157 10c on 25c brown